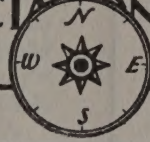


The COMPASS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS
130 E. 22d St. New York City



NOVEMBER, 1935

VOLUME XVII, NUMBER 3

Real Escape from Facing Relief Needs Is Impossible

A GOVERNMENT work program has been advocated by the AASW in each of its Delegate Conferences. Few, however, who know relief problems or administration of relief (with the exception of officials who are involved) have been found expressing faith in the substitution of WPA for the federal grants to states for general unemployment relief.

The reason for this is simple enough. A year ago the country had a program adapted to needs of persons rendered completely or partially helpless. Now the plan is to meet certain needs of persons who fit into a certain preconceived program. It establishes a new relief category for which preferential treatment is planned and relegates to other and uncertain, if not non-existent jurisdiction, millions of persons needing relief.

This is not a discussion of the work program. Work is certainly needed by unemployed persons. The WPA will eventually be appraised as a program to accomplish this. But what social workers know is that this experiment is being tried at the expense of vast numbers of men and women and children for whom no provision is assured. The WPA may find a way to adjust wage scales, or to provide necessary supplementation work to three and one-half million persons, to avoid the relief status which it requires of most of the workers. It will have to do all these things to prove itself a sound program. But even then it will fall short unless it supplements a basic plan by which the needs of those other millions, for whom it offers nothing, can be provided.

To take care of the situation a permanently installed, general relief program is necessary and there is no possibility that this can be achieved unless the federal government plays a substantial part in it.

Those who want persons in need to be provided for are confronted by tremendous problems. It would be well to recognize them so that effort may be directed jointly at the barriers. Here are a few:

1. The immense power of the Administration to influence the situation has shifted from the problem of *need*, which the public can readily understand, to *method*, which is very different. As the *need* is assumed by the Administration, it is difficult for the public and probably for Congress to realize that the chosen *method* fails to meet it.

2. Any proposal before Congress will be confronted by a strong barrier created by the clamor for economy and the attack on governmental expenditures. Experts aver this problem is complicated when elections are a few months ahead.

3. Those who resisted federal participation in relief in 1931 and 1932 held the doctrine that relief was a local or state function, but not properly a national function. That doctrine is now being revived, regardless of the capacity or readiness of states and localities to handle the problem. It is not a state or local problem. Neither in number nor in need have many states or local governments ever faced the immense relief problem which confronts them now. Furthermore, in most of the local jurisdictions, relief practices under the pauper laws have been so oppressive and mean, that they were tolerated only because they applied to a small and submerged fraction of the population. The federal government, unless it enters a new arrangement for assisting the states, will literally abandon about half of those to whom it now gives relief. Financial limitations of states and inability of local real estate taxes to expand the state and local resources are bound to set a new low in "pauper law" administration for these millions unless the federal government intervenes.

4. Promotion of the works program has given rise to a devastating but popular belief that there is a division between "employables" and "unemployables," and that the federal government is to be responsible for the former. Many of those who were relegated to the class damned as "unemployable" have since been employed! And as the

In This Issue

The Relief Crisis

The AASW program in support of federal relief.

Statements from chapters and officials on relief situation.

The AASW—What It Is and What It Does

The organization, program and committee assignments of the national Association.

Employment Practices

Principles of protection in social work.

Standards of employment practice outlined by New York Chapter.

An organization of supervisors.

Merit System in New Public Department, Delegate Conference, Meeting of New York State Council AASW, New National Committees

program has met its series of difficulties it has undertaken, not the care of all "employables," but of three and one-half million by quotas. Many others could work, but turn out to be "unemployables" in terms of WPA because that program cannot provide work for them.

5. Reference is frequently made to the Security Act and to the part it will play in enabling states to relieve persons in need. In those states, relatively a small proportion at present, which are prepared to utilize the assistance grants, which will be made if the next Congress provides the necessary appropriations, the care of the blind, some old persons, and some dependent children, but by no means all, will be provided for on a preferred basis. Except for those states in which funds are readily available, however, these "categorical" allowances will require state and local funds for these preferred classes, which would appear to leave the rest of the aged and the other dependent children, and all the other persons and families, facing greater need. In very small measure will the Security Act come to the rescue.

6. Add to these difficulties the quaint notion that private social work could or would or should take care of the need! The need of funds by private agencies apparently requires that a national publicity campaign employ nationally known public men and women to sponsor and speak for them. To the dismay of social workers, the distrust of government by a number of prominent men has been aired in the name of social work whose chief interest must be the development of sound public social services. As this influential endorsement of money raising probably is of

paramount importance to the money raisers, these views by grim mischance get circulation through social work sources. This will be something for social work to explain. In this case the cart is not only before the horse, but is definitely pulling in the wrong direction. The Family Welfare Association of America, on the other hand, is taking energetic steps to enlist all local societies in urging support of state and local public programs to clarify this problem.

Although the chest campaigns will probably realize only a small fraction of the sum needed for relief and will be able to devote but a small portion of what they raise to that purpose, they might, unless their limitations are explained, offer an additional excuse for not facing the responsibility which continues to be with the federal government. The predicament of private agencies of all kinds and the fate of their own programs is another matter.

7. The disposition in a time of comparative business activity to forget relief needs and to assume that such activity means immediate private income for those on relief is an old battle which recurs for every relief administration after every crisis and may be as much worse than ever before as the depression is worse than any that ever existed.

Social workers and others who know that relief is necessary and will continue to be, will find as always that this unpalatable issue will be avoided if it can. Local governments, the states, private charity, the Security Act; opportunities to escape the relief problem.

But none or all escapes would serve the purpose, which is, as it was in 1933, to meet the needs of the people of the country. It will require a well defined program, and all the evidence which social work can produce, and all the allies it can acquire, to make known the necessity for a new, permanently installed federal program, making grants-in-aid to states and entering into cooperation with states and local governments to establish a general program of relief for family and transient care throughout the country.

—WALTER M. WEST.

The AASW Program for the Relief Emergency

THE national program of the AASW in relation to the relief emergency, as adopted by the Executive Committee, is outlined below. This outline of the principles on which the program will be based and the activities which are planned to promote it has been sent to the chapters so that the national Association and the chapters may correlate their efforts as much as possible.

A. The national Executive Committee, on the advice of the Division on Government and Social Work, announces its decision to use all its influence in favor of a program including the following principles:

1. The federal government should set up immediately a program of federal relief.
2. This program should be administered by one of the permanently established federal bureaus, departments or administrations. The Social Security Board is suggested.
3. The federal government should make funds available to the states, and through states to local units, by means of a system of grants-in-aid to include contributions by state and local funds, likewise a substantial part of the total to be covered by the federal government.
4. This program shall be for the purpose of general family relief, and for care of transients.

(NOTE: These points are included in action taken in both Delegate Conferences and in other previous Association action.)

B. The Executive Committee has approved plans for the following steps to be taken by the national AASW:

1. A Committee on Relief Program of the Division on Government and Social Work will fill in details of the above legislative principles, and will attempt to have them incorporated in legislation in Washington.
2. A Committee on Relief Information of the Division will attempt to gather and use evidence of need for the federal government program along the following lines:
 - a. Information about relief needs will be secured immediately from state and county officials.
 - b. This material will be compared with chapter information.
 - c. Chapters will be requested to check periodically for progressive changes during the year.
 - d. A plan will be worked out to get large numbers of members, case workers, group workers, or others in touch with clients to submit brief summaries of individual or family situations which have been complicated by the shifting programs, or suffered from lack of provision.
 - e. Information will be sought bearing on the current fallacies that the WPA, private agencies, the states and coun-

ties, the provisions of the Federal Security Act, or any or all of these will take the place of an underpinning program of general family and transient relief.

3. The Division will endeavor to cooperate with a large number of agencies and organizations—civic, workers', women's, governmental, etc.—in presenting the case of a sound and permanently organized general relief and assistance program in which federal, state, and local governments cooperate.

The cooperation of these organizations and agencies may be on a national basis, but also in states, cities and counties, and the national Association will assist the chapters in any way possible in working out plans to make such cooperation effective. The immediate objective is to make known the needs for continued federal participation in a constructive program to Congressmen and Senators from the several states in the hope that legislative efforts may prevail early in the coming session of Congress. Presentation of material about needs and type of program will be arranged with these cooperating groups, aiming at any opportunities to make this material public through hearings, etc.

4. The Executive Committee is attempting to raise extra funds to make public the information on program and needs and to deal with popular misconceptions concerning relief programs, which have been increased by the bewildering changes of program.
5. As a part of this program of public interpretation, plans are being drawn for a Delegate Conference on the subjects outlined above. But it would differ from the previous conferences in that two days of the program would consist of prepared addresses by leading speakers, members or others, on the important aspects of the relief crisis with as wide publicity as possible. A third day of delegate discussion would follow as a means of developing the joint program of national and chapters in support of the federal relief program.

The AASW may not be able to carry out all parts of this program, and much of the detail is missing. Means are not at hand for either (4) or (5). Every effort is being made, however, to enlist the full weight of this organization of 9,400 members in a cause of great general interest.

While local programs must, of course, be much more concerned than is here indicated with state and local organization, legislation, and resources, the Division on Government and Social Work and the Executive Committee are unanimous in the opinion that interest at this time must also be directed to the federal program in order that states and local governments may have the resources, and may be encouraged to provide decent, humanitarian relief, and that through the grants-in-aid the strength of all three levels of government may be directed at a constructively organized, efficiently operated program. This appears to be the *only* way to avoid a disastrous future for millions of victims of the depression in many parts of the United States.

From the Record

The *Compass* welcomes the opportunity to publish an editorial which appears this month in the *Social Service Review*. It deals with a question which goes to the heart of the present relief crisis.

"LET'S LOOK AT THE RECORD"

The battle-front of the summer and autumn struggle between PWA and WPA has extended from Porto Rico to Hawaii and from Alaska to the reefs of Florida. While social workers have served as ambulance drivers, it is time to ask what policy or policies they advised with regard to the issues involved in the public works controversy. Were they supporters of the social-worker general, who is now in full command, or were social workers ranged in the side that has suffered at least temporary defeat? "Let's look at the record."

Review of *The Compass*, March, 1934, reveals that at the Delegate Conference of the American Association of Social Workers held in Washington in February, 1934, the Conference declared "it was opposed to the present program for gradual demobilization and ultimate termination of the Civil Works program . . . until there is something better to take its place" and also recommended the "principle of fair wage rates established for the Public Works Program" (p. 7); that Joanna Colcord, who led the discussion on this subject, pointed out:

The value of the civil works idea is lost if people have to be selected for it on the basis of need or if it fails to provide jobs for the majority of employables out of work. It should be considered as a plan to increase consuming power and to provide a new type of unemployment insurance and not as a relief measure (p. 2).

In the autumn of 1934, following the mandate of the Conference, the social workers' Committee on Employment and Relief Advisory to the President's Committee on Economic Security recommended that "the Government Employment Program should be divorced completely from relief and should be set up separately from public assistance." This meant, the report of the Committee explained—

that work should not be on a relief basis; that it should not be restricted to those on relief rolls; nor should it

be paid for on a budgetary deficiency basis. A price should be put on the work to be done and candidates for employment selected on the basis of their ability and not on the basis of individual need.

Such a program, the Committee pointed out, was to "be greatly preferred in every respect to work which, in the effort to avoid direct relief, would not be real work, and would be no less relief than a cash grant." Dorothy Kahn, the president of the AASW and director of emergency relief in Philadelphia, was chairman of this Advisory Committee, and the other members were Edith Abbott, Frank Bane, Fred Hoehler, Jacob Kepecs, Rev. (now Monsignor) O'Grady, Dr. Ellen C. Potter, Gay Shepperson, Linton Swift, and Walter West. All of these had served as relief administrators, had been in a position, or had made it their business, to know at first hand the human problems of unemployment and relief.

Joel Hunter, a member of the Advisory Council on Economic Security, carried these recommendations to the Council and secured the unanimous adoption by the Council of his recommendations. They are found in the Council's recommendation as to the "Government Employment Program" and include the following statements:

Unless work is separated from relief it loses most of its social values to the worker. Therefore the Government employment program should be divorced completely from relief, and should be set up separately from the public-assistance program recommended in this report.

Candidates for employment should be selected on the basis of their ability, not their need, but as there probably will not be sufficient Government work to give employment to everyone not now employed, applicants should be required to show that they are dependent on their own earnings and that they have had previous regular work experience.

At an informal conference on relief held in Chicago in preparation for the 1935 Delegate Conference of the AASW this subject was fully discussed, and those who were present will remember Dorothy Kahn's statement that if the President wanted to get people off relief he should give no one a public works job who is on relief, and if he wanted to increase greatly the numbers on relief he should rule that the jobs should go

THE COMPASS

Published monthly except August by
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS
130 EAST 22ND STREET NEW YORK, N. Y.
VOLUME XVII NUMBER 3

Officers

Dorothy C. Kahn, Pres.	Loula Dunn, 3rd V-Pres.
Lea D. Taylor, 1st V-Pres.	Elizabeth Dexter, Sec.
Mary Stanton, 2nd V-Pres.	Stanton M. Strawson, Treas.
Walter West, Executive Secretary	
Florence Taylor, Editor, The Compass	

Entered as second-class matter at the post office in New York, N. Y., under the Act of August 24, 1912

Acceptance for mailing at the special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized June 28, 1924.

Subscription: Non-Members \$1.00 per annum. Members including membership fee \$3.00 and over.

only to those on relief.

In the 1935 Delegate Conference of the AASW this view was general among relief administrators and others, and the recommendations of the Conference (*Compass*, March, 1935) included "a public works and service program, distinct from public relief," open "to any individuals in need of work, regardless of whether or not they are at present in receipt of relief," with the "rate of compensation not less than the prevailing wage," "the work to be useful and constructive," etc.

Thus social workers, speaking through their Delegate Conference, urged that a large-scale public works program should be planned in the winter of 1934 which would take account of the experience of CWA and PWA, but which should be divorced entirely from relief. Our program was rejected by the relief administrator and his chief, the President of the United States, in 1934 and again in 1935. While our record in resolutions is clear, we cannot escape some responsibility for the unscientific and unfair wage scales adopted for WPA, for the tragedy of thousands forced to apply for relief as the only way to get a job, and for all the confusion, delay, and consequent suffering of the past summer and autumn unless we can answer individually and as members of the American Association of Social Workers that we went about the problem of getting our program adopted with skill, intelligence, and determination.

Chicago University Press, Chicago, Ill., is reprinting this editorial and two others, "Federal Grants-in-Aid for Home Relief," and "The 'Liquidation' of the Federal Transient Service," in pamphlet form, and will supply a copy free to anyone sending a stamped envelope.

New York State Council Meeting

Legislation, the merit principle in personnel selection, and the organization of state forces to deal with the relief program were the three subjects of a full day's conference of about 40 representatives of the five chapters in New York State at Hartsdale December 7. Each of the five chapters sent, in addition to the chapter chairmen, representation from committees active on the subjects under discussion.

The New York State Council has been organized for several years, but has had to make progress slowly beyond the paper stage, as it was necessary to impress larger numbers of chapter members each year with the necessity for state-wide consideration of issues important to social workers.

The Hartsdale conference brought out clearly to its members the practical advantage of a state-wide channel for professional discussion of questions which are state-wide rather than local in their scope. It had the advantage of several immediate issues to make this demonstration. One was, for instance, the forthcoming report of the Wardwell Commission, which represents a year's study at Governor Lehman's order, of the factors

Delegate Conference

Special plans for a Delegate Conference, which will naturally be focussed on the relief situation, were discussed by the Executive Committee at its last meeting. Definite information about the Conference will be supplied very shortly to the membership. According to present plans, the Conference will be held about the first of February.

in the emergency relief administration and in the regular social welfare set-up of the state, which bear on the future plans for general welfare legislation. Many members of the AASW have been on the Commission's staff, and many problems of vital importance to future plans for social legislation are involved.

State Councils of the AASW have now been organized in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan and California, in addition to New York.

Finance Committee Appointed

Further study of a plan for AASW dues based on graduated payments according to income has been undertaken by the Finance Committee, which held its first meeting in November. Any members who have plans to suggest along this line are invited to submit them for the Committee's consideration. Address the Finance Committee, at the national office.

"Vigorous promotion of contributing and sustaining memberships" was recommended by the Finance Committee as a partial method of getting dues according to ability to pay. The Executive Committee accepted the recommendation and asked the Finance Committee for further plans.

Members of the Committee are: Chairman, Leroy A. Ramsdell, Hartford; T. E. Wintersteen, Buffalo; Harry M. Carey, Providence; Helen Shackelford, Reading; Mrs. Mary C. Burnett, Pittsburgh; Merton J. Trast, Washington, D. C.

Fred Hall Assisting National Association

Fred S. Hall, who has offered to assist the Association on some of its projects, is at present engaged in assembling current material on the relief situation for the Division on Government and Social Work. Mr. Hall has retired from the Russell Sage Foundation where for the last six years he has been Editor of the *Social Work Year Book*. The Association is very fortunate in having Mr. Hall's help at this time as it would otherwise be seriously handicapped by lack of staff in carrying forward the important program of the Division on Government and Social Work.

AASW Directory

Letter or post card orders for copies of the AASW Directory at the pre-publication price (\$1.50, paper cover; \$2.00, cloth cover) may be sent in to the national office up to the date of publication. There may still be those who have not sent in biographical data for listing but who wish to order the directory at the pre-publication price.

New Committee on Chapter Organization and Programs

Mrs. Elinor Hixenbaugh of Columbus, Ohio, has been appointed Chairman of a national standing committee of the AASW on Chapter Organization and Chapter Programs.

Accelerated growth of the Association in the past few years, and the greater opportunities for the profession to function actively, has put great pressure on chapters. This applies to programs chiefly, but their problem has been greatly complicated by the routine business of membership, dues, applications, lists, etc.

The new committee will be concerned with program experience as well as with organization experience. The national Association has always assumed that the chapters represent the principal channel for direct membership participation in professional activities, and this committee will have the responsibility for summarizing chapter experience for use by chapter officers.

Representation at AASW Delegate Conferences and national collection of chapter dues have put new emphasis on several organization problems of chapters also. Planning a basis for re-definition of local chapter areas, and setting standards for admission of new chapters, are questions which the national Executive Committee has referred to the new committee.

Members of the committee, serving with Mrs. Hixenbaugh, are James Nicholson, Chicago; Laura Deitzel, Milwaukee; Mrs. E. R. Castle, Cleveland; Minnie Byrne, Toledo; Elsa Castendyck, Minneapolis; Mary Stotsenberg, Louisville; Rev. Leo A. Geary, Buffalo.

New Public Department Sets Up Merit System

THE New Orleans Chapter of the American Association of Social Workers has been asked by the Director of the New Orleans Department of Public Welfare to appoint a Rating Committee from its membership to rate the examination of applicants for social work positions in the Department. Such a committee has been appointed by the Chairman, Mrs. Merle Dore, with the fol-

lowing representation: Maude Barrett, Social Service Director, Federal Emergency Relief Administration of Louisiana; Beatrice Hodge, Director of Social Service, Charity Hospital (N.O.); Carmellite Janvier, Head, Visiting Teacher Department, New Orleans Public Schools; Eva Smill, Executive Secretary, Family Service Society; and Elizabeth Wisner, Director of the School of Social Work of Tulane University.

The action of the Board of Public Welfare in establishing a merit system to safeguard professional standards in the Department is at present unofficial and without legal status as far as the city and state regulations are concerned. That such action was taken in a city where no real civil service prevails and where the spoils system is deeply entrenched is encouraging to the local professional group. A brief account of the action of the Board in respect to personnel appointments since its establishment in 1934 may be of interest to Association members.

The ordinance establishing the Department of Public Welfare, passed in January, 1934, provides that the director is to be appointed by the board and "shall be a person trained in welfare administration with at least three years' experience in executive capacity in this field, and shall be a citizen of the city of New Orleans. The director shall be empowered to select such administrative assistants as may be necessary subject to the approval of the board." New Orleans had never had any kind of public welfare department previous to this and the city was wholly without experience in the administration of outdoor relief, as well as other public welfare functions, except in respect to the administration of relief to the unemployed, first under a private citizens' committee and then by the federal government. From the beginning the Board of 15 members was anxious to secure qualified personnel but was without experience in civil service procedure and could only proceed experimentally. An announcement of the position of director of the department was made in the local press and qualified persons were asked to submit their applications. Thirteen applications were received but only three persons qualified and the present director was selected by the Board from the qualified list.

With a rapid expansion of the public assistance division the matter of the appointment and qualifications of personnel became urgent. In 1900 the state had passed a comprehensive civil service measure for the city of New Orleans, directing the classification of all city employees according to the merit system, but by 1924 all employees were exempted except the fire and police departments which came under special boards. Municipal em-

ployment practices were similar to those usually existing under the spoils system and were probably exaggerated due to the political situation in the state under the Long regime, which the city forces alternately opposed or collaborated with as expediency dictated. The extraordinary civil service law, passed at the Third Extraordinary Session of the Legislature in July, 1935, brought state control over local administration to a climax. This act provided that no municipal employee in cities over 100,000, other than elected officials, could be appointed by any such municipality or continued in office without the prior approval of the state Civil Service Commission, composed of the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the State Superintendent of Public Education, the Attorney General, the Superintendent of the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation, and the Secretary of State. This was one of thirty acts passed during the four-day session of the Legislature during which the public hearings in the Senate covering all bills lasted less than an hour and were personally presided over by the late Senator Huey P. Long.

In the face of this situation the Board proceeded along the lines of the merit system which it had voted to adopt the preceding February. All positions in the department were classified and professional preparation in an accredited school of social work made the basis of all social work appointments. Formerly, the Board had felt reluctant to allow the rating of the applications by any group outside the Board membership and had delegated this responsibility to the personnel committee. Undoubtedly, the action of the Legislature strengthened the proposal previously made to the Board that the department should go all the way in establishing an informal merit system by asking the professional organization, i.e., the local chapter of the American Association of Social Workers, to cooperate in the actual rating of examinations. Such action was given the appropriate publicity in the local press. So far the State Civil Service Commission has approved all appointments and following the death of Senator Long there is a strong demand for the repeal of the recent legislation. That the department has so far withstood one of the most chaotic political situations extant anywhere is due to a combination of factors, many of which were beyond the control of the Board. However, the consistent and clear-cut action of the Board in regard to its personnel policies has not been without influence.

ELIZABETH WISNER.

Classifications and Salary Scales in Public Department

The adoption of an informal merit system by the New Orleans Department of Public Welfare was preceded by essential ground work which included classifications of all positions and minimum and maximum salary scales for each position. The classifications are given below, together with the professional requirements and salary scales for the four social work classifications and for "untrained field workers."

I. District Secretaries—Salary \$1800-\$2100 Education and Experience

- (a) B. A. Degree from recognized university or college.
One year of professional preparation in an accredited school of social work.
Minimum of three years' experience in accredited agency.
- (b) B. A. Degree.
Two years of professional preparation in school of social work.
Two years of experience.
- (c) B. A. Degree.
One semester or two quarters of work in an accredited school of social work with supervised field work.
Five years of experience in a social work agency.

It is recommended that increases be based upon the progress made by the several secretaries, and that no automatic increases be made.

II. Senior Case Workers—Salary \$1500-\$1800

- (a) One year in an accredited school of social work.
Two years of experience.
- (b) Two years in an accredited school of social work.
One year of experience.

It is recommended that an increase of \$5.00 per month be optional at the end of the first year, and an increase of \$10.00 per month be optional at the end of the second year, and that an additional \$10.00 per month increase be allowed at the end of the third year of service which would bring the annual salary to \$1800, the maximum in this classification.

III. Case Worker—Salary \$1320-\$1500

- (a) One year in an accredited school of social work.
One year of experience.
- (b) Two years in an accredited school of social work without experience.

It is recommended that subject to recommendation of the Director an increase of \$5.00 per month be optional at the end of each year of service for three years, until the maximum is reached.

IV. Junior Case Worker—Salary \$1200-\$1320

- (a) One year in an accredited school of social work without experience.

It is recommended that subject to recommendation of the Director an increase of \$5.00 per month be op-

tional at the end of each year of service for two years, until the maximum is reached.

V. Untrained Field Workers—Salary \$780-\$960

Education and equipment sufficient to permit of admission to an accredited school of social work.

Workers in this classification who have received training of less than a year in an accredited school of social work may receive salaries of from \$70 to \$75 per month, depending upon courses taken, and \$80 per month if they have completed one full semester.

It is recommended, subject to recommendation of the Director, that an optional increase of \$5.00 per month at the end of the first six months be granted and thereafter an increase of \$5.00 per month at the end of every year until the stop salary of \$80 is achieved.

Clerical and other positions were classified as follows with a definite salary scale for each classification and recommendations in regard to specific increases: Cashier; Assistant Accountant; Bookkeepers; Secretaries; Clerks holding responsible positions; Stenographers; File Clerks, and other Types of Clerical Workers; Beginning Workers without experience.

Provisions for vacations and sick leave were also adopted:

Vacations

Vacations for Clerical Workers should be at the rate of 15 days per year's service. Vacations from year to year may not be accumulated. Where a worker is employed for only part of a calendar year, length of vacation should be pro-rated on same basis.

Vacations for Field Workers and Social Workers should be at the rate of 21 days per year's service. Vacations from year to year may not be accumulated. Where a worker is employed for only part of a calendar year, length of vacation should be pro-rated on same basis.

Sick Leave

Sick leave should be granted at the discretion of the Director, provided leave is not in excess of 30 days in any year. In such cases the matter must be referred to the Personnel Committee for approval. Sick leave in excess of two weeks for anyone employed less than six months must be approved by the Personnel Committee.

What the AASW Means

The meaning of the AASW to its members and the way in which the professional group is challenged by the social conditions of today are described in the following paragraphs from an address by Louise Cottrell to members of the AASW at the Oregon Conference of Social Work:

Chiefly, I should say, the AASW is a gravitating together for informal discussion and for the pooling of their thinking of those who feel their own need for

more light and who seek it from both the past and present, from each other, from those outside the group and outside of the immediate time and place as well. It is a recognition that the service which we are trying to render deals in an important way with human life and human pain. We stand humble before this task, realizing at least in part the cost of our own inadequacies in terms of other lives. The trial and error method was all that we had at the beginning. Gradually through the years a body of experience has accumulated. In our generation and the one preceding us it has been recorded. This contains truths which can help reduce our blunders and increase the effectiveness of our efforts. We would use not alone what others have handed down to us, but we would also analyze our own work in the hope of improving it, and if we may, of adding our small contribution to the total body of experience in the social work field.

Honest and frequent discussion, courage to seek out and face facts however uncomplimentary to our own efforts, and a merging of individual effort with that of the group—all of these in the interest of those who turn to us for needed help describes the AASW perhaps as well as a more formal definition. Social work is a broad and varied field. It includes principles and methods of dealing with families in a great variety of difficulties, with children both within their own homes and separated from their parents, with the aged, with the mentally ill and the physically handicapped, with those whom we term delinquent, and with vast thousands unable to find work. Then there is the important field of public welfare, the programs of the various units of government operating in behalf of all of the people in need and maintained by the people as a whole. Too little have we given of our thought and attention to this important field until widespread suffering close at home drafted our thought onto the subject. Social research is still another variety of social work which merits more thought than we have yet given it. There are other fields of social work not mentioned here, but also important. As yet we are conscious in only a dim way of the wealth of pertinent conclusions reached by our predecessors and by some of our contemporaries. We face haltingly the challenge of a program of prevention, a program of positive opportunities to all men according to their talents. In the name of the scores of unhappy people whom we wish to serve constructively, we as social workers dedicate not alone our time, but our minds as well as our hearts to our profession. We would guard against becoming mere automatons applying mechanically the accepted procedures of the past merely because they are accepted or were accepted at one time. We challenge ourselves and our methods by facing the results of our efforts whether or not they be pleasing. And we seek more light from our group, from the communities that press in upon us with their problems as well as from those more distant in time and place, from the present as well as from the past. If we do not accept responsibility for leadership in these troubled times, certainly we can not escape responsibility for our own competence, nor for interpreting to the public the far reaching social problems which come to us in our day to day work and the objectives we would reach with their indispensable participation.

THE RELIEF OUTLOOK AROUND THE COUNTRY

What Some of the AASW Chapters and Responsible Officials
Have to Say About the Relief Situation.

Columbus Chapter

The Columbus Chapter has canvassed the situation in Franklin County, Ohio, and having found a large number of persons whose needs are uncared for, has presented the facts to the President, officials of the Relief administration and members of the Senate and Congress from Ohio, and the newspapers. Among the facts on which the chapter bases its conclusions that further Federal relief funds are necessary are:

Approximately 2,000 cases in which employable persons have not been put to work because the projects were not sufficient or were inaccessible or were unsuitable, or because some of the projects would not start until spring.

Increasing volume of application from able-bodied persons as the winter months approach, threatening heavier case loads.

Ineligibility to the work program of those who applied for relief between May 1, 1935, and the present time.

Wages which, in the case of large families, are less than the minimum budget needs.

Approximately 3,050 families or persons not classified as employable with serious problems which could be dealt with constructively if sufficient organizations were maintained with the help of the Federal government.

The resolutions also point out that great gains have been made in caring for the needs of unemployed and others who need public assistance during the period of the Federal relief program but that all of these gains are threatened by the withdrawal of public funds.

Similar analysis of the transient problem and the necessity for Federal provision for transient care was also reported to responsible public officials and the press.

St. Louis Chapter

In St. Louis a permanent Council on Relief Needs composed of 64 labor and social service organizations has been established in the city and county, and the AASW chapter was represented at a mass meeting. Adequate relief, continuation of federal direct relief, and union wage scales on WPA projects were endorsed.

Peter Kasius, member of the AASW Executive Committee, wired November 14 that WPA was not likely to absorb more than 25,000 out of a total case load of 45,000, and that state and local public funds can care for only about 10,000. Further lowering of relief standards and administration standards was threatened.

Pittsburgh Chapter

The Pittsburgh Chapter calls on the national Association to present the needs throughout the country for continued federal participation in direct relief. The Chapter resolution points to the inability of local and state governments to provide sufficient finances immediately or to plan relief budgets or tax levies without definite knowledge of the federal program or the duration of the Works program. Pressure should be brought to bear to end the continued insecurity of relief recipients and the inability to plan of agencies administering relief.

Cincinnati Chapter

The Cincinnati Chapter recently sent representatives to a delegation of citizens and public officials who had a hearing before the Taxation Committee of the House of Representatives on November 18. The Committee recommended emphatically that the state participate in meeting the relief needs in Ohio's 88 counties. While no action was taken on the continuance of federal direct relief, the Chapter has also endorsed a wire which the Advisory Board of the WPA in Hamilton County has sent to Washington. This wire pointed out that up to November 1, 421 projects had been approved, totaling 4500 man-years, and that 65% of these projects were in operation. "The balance," the telegram stated, "is dependent upon the receipt of federal and sponsors' materials and some other conditions that cannot be met immediately. Instructions have been given to put on additional men. This community would not tolerate placing the worker where there was not possibility of work being done."

Big projects covering a wider spread in the classification of workers was advocated and it was pointed out that very few white-collar or women's projects had been approved.

Projects totaling 2800 man-years were in operation but by doubling up 8500 men were involved. This attempt to spread work was not considered successful.

Seattle-Tacoma Chapter

The Executive Committee of the Seattle-Tacoma Chapter has sent the following telegram to the President: "Relief in Washington continuing for transients and residents but funds so limited that without federal aid for both, situations will become acute. We urge continuation of federal aid until work programs and federal security measures

are actually relieving destitution for both transients and residents. Because of enlightened policy in giving relief to transients from general fund Washington in danger of suffering influx from other states where transient relief has been withdrawn."

Denver—Official Report

The Association has been advised that the President of the Board of Directors of the Denver Bureau of Public Welfare, Mr. Amos Sudler, and Mayor Benjamin F. Stapleton have wired the President that "Announced intent of federal government to stop relief allotments November 30, will mean literal starvation for three thousand employable Denver families. These white collar men, unskilled women and men able to do light labor only cannot be placed on jobs as WPA has no projects calling for work they are physically able to perform. Six hundred new employable applicants for relief monthly cannot be assisted if new federal policy is not changed. Two hundred and eighty-five transient families most of whom have no legal residence have applied for relief in Denver during past month after being forced to leave other states because of discontinuance of federal transient program. Plight of transient single men equally acute. This condition sentences these people to perpetual aimless wandering across the country. There are no local resources for care of foregoing groups as estimated funds for care of Denver's unemployables are \$800,000 short for 1936. Similar conditions reported throughout Colorado. Summary reversal of definitely announced policy by federal government that employable families would be served with federal funds will soon result in intolerable conditions."

New York City Chapter

A statement on the relief situation issued by the New York City Chapter urges a change in the city charter permitting a permanent relief set up, appropriation of sufficient funds for the program, state aid to local governments, a conference of Governors called by the President for joint planning for relief, welfare, and social security, federal appropriations for the Security Act, recognition of federal responsibility for transient care and programs of "real work at real wages" by various governmental units. Further the statement says:

1. The Federal government should continue its acceptance of responsibility for participating with the states in the provision of adequate relief. The attempt to divide the responsibility arbitrarily into "employables" and "unemployables"—the Federal government to provide work for part of the former, and the states and their subdivisions to furnish all direct relief to

the remainder—is, we strongly believe, unsound in theory and will prove to be unworkable in practice. While we recognize the American tradition that the primary relief obligation rests upon the locality, we believe that the time has passed in our national life when this tradition can be blindly followed without substantial modification. Just as the causes of need are interwoven with economic and social conditions only a part of which are local, so the resources to meet those needs must be marshalled on a broad national front. The Federal government has a real obligation to stay in "this business of relief" as a partner of the states and their subdivisions.

2. We are not concerned over the perpetuation of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, as such, nor do we advocate a continuation of all the activities of that agency. Rather we feel that a more permanent type of organization should be set up for the essential purpose of providing financial aid to the states on terms which will result in adequate public assistance being rendered to those in need of it. This aid should be given in the form of grants based upon the application of the equalization principle. The relationship of the Federal set-up to the states should be a cooperative one which would lead to the development of strong state and local welfare departments in which a high type of service would be rendered without regard to political considerations.

Philadelphia Chapter

"What About This Business of Relief?" was the topic of a Town meeting staged by the Philadelphia Chapter, with the Council of Social Agencies cooperating, November 25. The meeting was held in the Academy of Music with about 2500 present. Addresses by a representative group of citizens including the Mayor-elect, the Chairman of the County Relief Board, the Regional Chairman of the Unemployed Councils, a member of the Legislature; two prominent attorneys identified with social work, and Dorothy Kahn and Karl de Schweinitz presented the facts and arguments which supported the conviction that the relief program requires the continued cooperation of the federal government.

Resolutions were adopted calling on the President and the Relief Administration to continue to recognize the "imperative necessity for continuance of federal assistance for direct relief of the unemployed until an orderly and gradual withdrawal can be effected without imposing the threat of starvation on men, women and children largely depending on federal help."

Resolutions were also sent to the Mayor, Governor, legislators, Congressmen and Senators, urging state and local relief provision and asking their cooperation in securing continuing federal relief.

Resolutions drafted by the Central Labor Union of Philadelphia were also presented.

New York State—Governor's Commission

New York State's relief and welfare programs have been under scrutiny of a Governor's Commission for several months. Hugh Jackson, the Commission's Director of Research, summarized recently by radio, some of the findings. The following excerpts bear on problems to be dealt with in next steps in relief administration:

"No more important problem faces the state than the determination of its policy with regard to unemployment relief. . . . The greatest difficulty which has faced us during the past five years, while public relief has been so gigantic and so costly, is the inevitable confusion which accompanies temporary and emergency methods of handling the problem. . . . This yearly extension of the temporary emergency structure for relief has practically precluded the possibility of any long range planning for the meeting of our unemployment situation. The matter has further been immeasurably complicated by the numerous and rapid changes which have been made in Federal relief policy. . . . It is inconceivable to think that we should continue during the years to come to meet the problem of unemployment relief on such a short time basis. Although the number of relief recipients is now abnormally large,

there can be little doubt but that the problem of unemployment relief will continue to be a major governmental concern for many years to come. . . . Sudden changes in policy every six months or a year must give way to a more coherent and continuing plan of intelligently and humanely caring for those people who are unable to maintain themselves. Our experience with unemployment relief to date indicates that the backbone of any public assistance system must be home relief. The idea that *all able-bodied employable recipients of relief may be put to work* on work projects which have a definite value to the community and that these projects can be efficiently operated and remain non-competitive, is a fine social theory, the practical operation of which must fall short of its theoretical objective. . . . It would be unwise and impractical to consider the setting up of any permanent program for public assistance which was not based on the proposition that home relief is the key-stone and foundation of any sound program of public aid. . . . This requires that the more permanent character of the relief function be recognized and that it be integrated with the other welfare services such as old age security, mothers' allowances and the care of dependent children, the administration of which service by local communities is now under the supervision of the state government."

PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL PROTECTION

During the past year the Division on Employment Practices has considered the study of the Association's grievance procedure one of its major projects. This was not an arbitrary selection, but was based on the hypothesis that any professional organization, attempting to set standards for its field, must of necessity have organizational machinery for protecting such standards. The Association did have formal machinery for "cases of controversy" adopted in 1927. This "machinery" was rarely used and little known. Why? The Division believes it was because an effective protective function must be predicated on a collective sense of professional responsibility for standards and goals of the profession. Mere adoption of a plan will not insure thoughtful action. With this in mind the Division suggests that the Association not think of this function in terms of "machinery" or "procedures," but rather as principles of professional protection. In a meeting held on November 2 and 3 the Division endorsed the following statement as summarizing accurately the thinking of the Division which led to the "Tentative Machinery for Handling Complaints," published in the July, 1935, *Compass*. The Division suggests chapter study and application of these principles in local situations, so that "the protective function" of the AASW may take on meaning and validity. It is believed by the Division that to be "professional" you must assume "protective" responsibility for what that term implies.

HAS the AASW a protective function? If not, why not? If so, why? And how does it perform this function? Since these questions have recurred frequently in one form or another, it may be worth discussing in some detail, the thinking which went into the suggested procedure for considering complaints (published in *The Compass*, July, 1935).

Can a professional organization undertake to "protect" its members in their jobs, as a union organization does, making "protection" of tenure of the job and other conditions of work its paramount concern?

A professional organization should do less than this—and more. It can do less of the protection of tenure of position for every member because it must do more. It must protect the tenure of jobs of members of the profession on the basis of their qualifications for those jobs. The AASW protection is not only of individuals, but a protection of professional concepts such as standards of service. The protection of professional standards of service makes effective the protection of persons. This protection is a plan to work for all professional standards. This becomes our rationale for a grievance procedure.

Professional social work has a responsibility to protect the public through maintaining the professional character of social work. The Bar Association and the Medical Association take responsibility for protecting the public against un-

professional conduct on the part of their members. Because the members of those professions are largely paid by their clients, rather than employed by organizations, there is little problem of "protecting" their members from unfair or unsatisfactory employment conditions. In the profession of social work, the supervisors and executives, themselves social workers with a stake in the professional character of social work, are the ones who discharge the responsibility of disciplining unprofessional conduct, whether on the part of members of the AASW or not. There seems little likelihood that the AASW would be called upon to discipline its membership. But many occasions have arisen when its members, and others in the field of social work, have been "disciplined" by employers for other than professional reasons. It is in these situations that the professional association, if it is to discharge its responsibility to the community to maintain the professional character of social work, must recognize its stake.

It goes without saying that many of the reasons for discharge are excuses, and that "unprofessional conduct" is stretched to cover many extraneous matters. We have to recognize the right of the agency to determine its own standards. There can be no set rules as to what does or does not constitute fitness for a particular job. A Unitarian ought not to be discriminated against in a public relief agency because of his belief. But no one would question the right of an Episcopal agency to employ only members of its own faith. Then there is the great, undefined territory where the difference in interpretations of good taste, good judgment, good moral character, create misunderstanding and sometimes cause injustice. Is a due regard for the prejudices of a community and of individual members of the Board, a *sine qua non* of professional conduct? In any situation there are bound to be differences of opinion as to what is professionally acceptable and what is not. For instance, a worker may do a good routine job, yet in a case working agency whose standard demands continual growth, intelligent experimentation, and creative achievement, she would not be acceptable when her limited capacity for growth became evident. And the Association, in protecting the professional character of the job, could not quarrel with her dismissal.

If it does nothing else, an attempt to define the limits of protection which a professional organization may give practitioners emphasizes the need for a clear-cut agreement of the agency and the social worker at the time of employment. If certain local customs or standards are important to the agency, they should see that the worker understands this at the time of employment, rather than dragging them in as reasons for dismissal or demo-

tion after the worker has infringed them. Workers would do themselves and their agencies a service by clarifying the standards for professional performance of their agencies through a frank discussion at time of employment of the issues involved.

The Association's relation to a disagreement on this subject can be one of fact-finding where facts are in dispute; or, when the facts are agreed upon, of interpreting them in the light of the principle of the contractual basis of employment and of professional competence, as the sole basis for hiring, promotion, or dismissal.

It is necessary, of course, in professional development for the policies of agencies to change to meet new conditions. Contractual agreements with employees should not prevent such necessary or desirable changes. But the professional employees should have a voice in the changes, or where this is impossible, should be informed of them in advance, so that they may have opportunity to make, as it were, a new contract. Acceptance of agency conditions of work should not prevent employees from working to secure improvement of conditions.

The question of whether the Association should act on behalf of non-members as well as members can be answered best in the light of the objective of protecting professional quality. Where the non-members are professional workers, the interest of the profession is best served by including them in any plan for review of complaints. It is natural that professional members of the Association should be reluctant to fight the battles of non-members whose activities, for which they may be under fire, are not such as the professional members would be likely to engage in. But unless it is clearly apparent that these activities make for professional incompetence, members would do well to make the issue clear-cut. Only by establishing securely in the minds of the public and the boards, the criterion of professional competence for professional employment, can the social worker protect the professional character of his job. Any attack on this principle is an attack upon the standards of the profession and upon the qualified worker. The Association and the chapters should therefore be alert to occasions when this professional principle is in jeopardy.

Less clear-cut is the question of whether the Association should take steps to determine the competence of non-professional workers, such as clerical or maintenance workers, when they seem to be discharged for reasons other than competence. Yet the stability or efficiency of such workers can vitally affect the performance of the professional workers. Complaints on behalf of such workers, therefore, should be considered, insofar as it does not absorb too much of the time

of the chapter and thus limit its ability to deal with complaints on behalf of professional workers.

It is, of course, clear that general policies, or lack of policies, jeopardize professional performance more fundamentally perhaps than an isolated act of dismissal or demotion, or even failure to promote. Such policies, therefore, should be subject to review by the chapter in the light of the same professional principle.

The chapter could not set out to examine the working conditions of each member unless it made that its only function. But it can receive complaints from any member or from any social agency or employee of a social agency. In order to leave open an avenue for disciplinary action, the chapter may receive complaints from an interested person, if it concerns a member of AASW.

In a consideration of complaints or grievances, the more flexible the machinery by which a review can be made, the more effective it is likely to be. The person responsible for receiving such complaints should be accessible and known to have assumed that responsibility. But it does not seem so important that a certain number of persons should be appointed in a certain way, as that the chapter should feel its professional responsibility at stake in securing facts and interpreting them, thoroughly, fairly, and professionally. If we can determine clearly what the question at issue is, the committee can more effectively discharge its responsibility to procure the facts upon which the answer can be based. The question at issue must be, either, has a contractual agreement, written or verbal, been violated; or has the administrative act complained of been taken for other reasons than because of professional incompetence? Feeling runs high whenever a disagreement reaches the stage of seeking outside help in settling it.

All the more desirable, then, that the chapter responsibility be recognized and means for chapter action be made available at an early stage. But occasions may occur when the AASW has responsibility, but no local committee could be formed that would not be somehow involved already. It is then that the national committee should stand ready to help form a satisfactory committee. Or either party may be dissatisfied with the committee's or chapter's findings or action. Then the national committee can be called upon to review the case.

Perhaps the greatest value of consideration of complaints lies in the possible action after the committee has come to a conclusion. This may go as far as the convictions of the committee are prepared to carry it. A written report and recommendations should certainly go to the chapter Executive Committee for action. A copy should go to the national office, so that experience of chapters may help other chapters meet similar situations. Beyond this, the report or parts of it, may be published; reinstatement can be sought. The Association of University Professors almost never secures reinstatement, but it is able by publicity given its findings, to penalize institutions guilty of discharging professors for other reasons than professional competence. A similar effect can be secured by the chapter just insofar as social agencies are susceptible to public opinion.

It is not possible to foresee and discuss all that may be involved in the use of complaint procedure. Nevertheless, the experience of chapters that are courageous enough to experiment should develop guide-posts along the difficult road of professional responsibility.

RACHAEL CHILDREY GROSS,
Chairman, Division on
Employment Practices.

THE SUPERVISORS OF NEW YORK CITY ERB ORGANIZE

The philosophy, form and action of protective organizations is currently receiving great attention in the field of social work. Is it professional to organize protectively? Are employee organization and collective action feasible in social work? These and many other questions are met with daily. The experiences outlined in the following article of a group of social workers, mostly professionally trained, and filling executive, administrative or supervisory positions in Home Relief Bureau, New York City, contribute to our knowledge of these problems. The article was prepared by the Executive Committee of the Supervisors' Association.

INTEREST in a Supervisors' Association in New York has been latent and ready to come to the surface when the occasion called for group action. Such an occasion arose in the spring of 1935 at the time of the aldermanic investigations of the Emergency Relief Bureau. Social workers had been put on the defensive and the air was tense. In May, 1935, a call was sent out and organization meetings were held, which resulted in the adoption of a constitution and the election of officers early in June.

The main organization question that was settled at this time was that anyone eligible to the Home Relief Bureau Employees' Association (now

known as the Association of Workers in Public Relief Agencies) was not eligible for membership in the Supervisors' Association; that is, the supervisory aides being members of the Employees' Association were excluded from the Supervisors' Association, the latter including in its membership district office administrators, case supervisors, office managers, assistant supervisors, medical social workers, nutritionists, and supervisory staff of central office departments. This definite policy was adopted in order to render impossible any rivalry for membership between the Employees' and the Supervisors' Associations.

The constitution states the purposes of the Supervisors' Association as follows:

1. To provide a forum for the interchange of ideas and an instrumentality through which the collective thinking of the supervisory staff can be given official expression.
2. To maintain standards consistent with the most effective service to the community and to interpret such standards to the community.
3. To contribute to the formulation of Home Relief Division policies.
4. Better acquaintance and mutual benefits.

The committees that have been set up to carry out the study and research functions of the Association, and thereby prepare it for contribution to policy-making, are Employment Practices, Personnel Standards, Public Welfare Relief Standards, Public Welfare Administration, and Public Relations. The first two correspond to divisions of the national AASW and are looking to the national AASW for cooperation and consultation. The Public Welfare Administration Committee chairman has also been asked to become a member of a similar committee in the New York Chapter of AASW.

In order to make the work of the research committees effective in policy-making, it is necessary to work out the difficult problem of relationships between the Supervisors' Association and the administration, the staff, and the public. Our relation with the administration is one that needs much careful thinking through, and objectivity. Through experience only will we arrive at a working relationship that is most effective in terms of our total goal. This goal is participation in the creating, evaluating, and administering of policy in the best interest of the client. A creative contribution to policy should come from the supervisors and it is probable that this can only be accomplished in the free discussion of an independent group. Criticism, evaluation of experience, and research should go hand in hand. Loyalty to the recognized standards of social work and to professional aims may be found to be in conflict

with agency policies dictated by the exigencies of the moment. Just how frank and fearless criticism of definite policies may be, becomes an involved question when faced with obligations of loyalty to the agency and the fulfillment of administrative responsibilities. These questions take us into untried fields and, as has been said, only experience can guide us to a statement of sound policy.

Relationship to rank and file organizations is also a problem to be solved. Our co-ordinating committee is working out a concrete statement of principles of cooperation with rank and file groups. A sound basis has been laid with AWPR in that the two associations are in no wise rivals for membership. The test which recently faced us was the question of reduction of staff following the large transfer of Home Relief cases to WPA. The Employees' Association made a study of the staff situation and service needs of the clients; the Supervisors' Association and the administration made similar studies. These three studies differ mainly in the size of the average case load recommended. When the administration decided on a reduction of staff on a 50 average case load basis, the Employees' Association first asked for a public hearing before the Board. When the ruling for a reduction of staff was not changed, they later called a three-hour stoppage. The Supervisors' Association, which had made a study of the situation and gone on record for an average case load of 45 cases per investigator, pronounced its belief in the right of the employees to stop, and endorsed the particular stoppage called by the Employees' Association. It also went on record against punitive action toward those who took part in the stoppage. The principles on which these actions were taken were: (1) an affirmation of belief in the principle of the right to organize; (2) an affirmation of belief in the right to stop for a brief period as a tactic to focus attention upon the need to maintain adequate staff for adequate standards. It was believed that a brief stoppage during which a skeleton staff would man the offices, would not seriously interfere with service to the client and would give the employees the opportunity to lay their arguments and the findings of their study before the public and the highest policy-making and appropriating body of the city.

The problem of the Supervisors' Association is so to clarify its thinking that it may freely express its convictions as a professional body without being expected always to defend either the position of the administration or of the employees if questions of difference arise. Our hope is that through reflection and testing we may be able to set up definite professional principles which will serve as standards of reference when immediate situations become confused and perplexing.

STANDARDS OF EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE

Report of the Committee on Employment Practice New York City Chapter, AASW

This report was prepared for the New York City Chapter by a committee composed of Clarence King, Chairman; Mary Brisley, Erma Coffman, Ida Curry, John Fitch, Marcel Kovarsky, Mary Palevsky, Luba Wende and Alfred Winters. Copies of the report have been sent by the chapter to 250 local agencies, to some national organizations and to local organized workers' groups, requesting comments for consideration in further revisions of the report.

DURING the past year the chapter has been asked to participate in many questions involving employment relationships in social work. Several of the committee have served in the past on committees to inquire into particular instances in which it was alleged that sound personnel practices had been violated. After prolonged consideration, the committee decided not to endeavor to gather and weigh the evidence in any similar cases at this time. It seemed to us of prior importance to define the chapter's interest in this area and to attempt a statement of certain principles of desirable employment practice which might serve as a tentative standard against which alleged violations could be considered.

The committee bases its interest and motivation in this subject upon a consideration of the importance of adequate employment practices as a means of attracting to the profession desirable recruits, of holding in the practice of social work those most qualified to serve, and of establishing a working environment which will be conducive to enthusiastic effort. It sees the function of employment practices as being closely related to the central objective of the Association—the promotion of standards of qualified service. It considers this objective as being achieved by means of a qualified social work personnel, adequately prepared, working under desirable conditions and performing at its maximum proficiency.

As a professional organization the American Association of Social Workers has progressively attempted to further this objective by applying standards of training and experience and by establishing standards of practice. In relation to this professional interest, employment practices may be considered as an additional means of developing the standards of social work service. Thus, the Association is working toward the objective of better qualified service by the dual approach of training, experience and qualifications of the prac-

titioner; and of adequate and desirable employment practices.

In its present status, social work functions by means of social agencies. These agencies, we believe, must measure their effective service in terms of their personnel. Their ability to serve will be no greater than the combined ability of their staff to function. Here standards of service to clients are seen to be inextricably related to staff welfare and working conditions. Social agencies and professional organizations of social workers may cooperate profitably in promoting community recognition of the concept that support of social welfare programs must entail support of desirable conditions of employment for welfare personnel.

It was with this background of thinking that the committee prepared the appended statement of desirable employment practices for chapter discussion. We fully realize that these standards are tentative and incomplete and we doubt that they should ever become static. While we have been mainly concerned with the formulation of principles which we realize need the establishment of concrete, specific procedures in each agency to make them effective, we believe that these principles are basic and that they merit the critical consideration of social workers and laymen concerned with the practice of social work.

SUGGESTED STANDARDS OF DESIRABLE EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

The primary purpose of any social agency is to render the best possible service to its clientele. This must also be the objective of the staff through whom it operates. Employment practices may be tested by the extent to which they further this common goal through making possible the better functioning of the staff.

In order that employment practices may serve their purpose, it is important that they be clearly understood by both the agency and the prospective staff member at the time of employment. This does not obviate, of course, the need for progressive attention to the improvement of these practices.

1. Staff Suggestions, Criticisms, and Grievances

There should be established in every public and private agency some clearly understood method by which members of the staff may make suggestions for improving the service or may report grievances on behalf of themselves or others. The larger the

agency, the more formal will the machinery have to be and the more care will be necessary to be sure that all employees understand it and have confidence in its operation.

The particular method adopted is of secondary importance. The essential thing is that it be clearly outlined and generally understood and that it be sincerely used by executive and staff alike, to gather useful suggestions, to avoid the frustration that results from unstated grievances and to cure mistakes before they become serious.

2. *Appeal from Executive Decision*

Where the above policy is followed, appeal from the decision of the chief executive will not generally be necessary, but for possible instances of alleged autocratic and unfair action, where grave injustice may have been done, or where a major question of policy is involved, some further procedure should be provided. Where a board is the ultimate authority within the agency or department, appeal to this board should be arranged. Where there is no board or where the staff believes that the board itself has erred in a grave matter of policy, the only remaining recourse is to the ultimate authority which resides in the contributing or voting public. To make such an appeal effective is a complicated process, but such an attempt would be good practice when the issue involved is of sufficient importance. One thing is clear—the staff should not attempt an appeal to the public until it has exhausted internal grievance machinery and procedure for appeal to the chief executive.

One reason for employing the internal machinery is to give the agency itself an opportunity to effect the change, if one is needed. Moreover, the staff will then have a stronger case if they ultimately decide to appeal to the interested public. Many controversial situations arise from lack of complete understanding of all the facts by the executive, the staff, or the board. Face-to-face consideration of the problem, in which each shares his special information, may result in an adjustment of the matter, or if not, then in a more intelligent and effective appeal to the public.

The executive of an agency has a responsibility to keep his staff informed of the policies of the agency and of the reasons underlying them. Staff members also have a responsibility to inform themselves of all the circumstances and issues involved, so that if they ultimately decide to make an appeal to the public, they will do so with such care and intelligence that service to the client will not be endangered.

(Our conclusions on this point need elaboration and we suggest that the subject be given further study during the coming year.)

3. *Freedom of Speech*

The freedom with which a social worker may express himself on matters of general social policy should be subject only to such limitations as apply to any citizen. Because of his special knowledge and his professional responsibility for clients' welfare, the social worker is at times under especial obligation to speak. When a staff member wishes to speak on an important policy as to which his agency has not yet taken a position or as to which he and his agency may not agree, it is important that he should make every reasonable effort to emphasize and clarify the fact that he is not speaking or acting as a representative of the agency.

4. *Dismissals*

Employment and tenure in social work should be based solely upon competence. It follows that an employee should not be dismissed for expression of opinion unless he has harmfully misrepresented his agency to the public or has used tactics tending to weaken the agency in its service to clients. Before a staff member is dismissed, he should be clearly informed in writing of the reasons for his dismissal and be given an opportunity to be heard in his own behalf. The hearing should be informal and should be public in the sense that he should have the opportunity to bring others with him, either to hear the explanation or to speak in his behalf.

Notification of dismissal should be followed by a previously established period, during which salary should continue. The agency should have the right to dispense with the worker's services during this period.

5. *Staff Members' Organizations*

The right of staff members to organize either to improve their own economic condition or the conditions of work or to secure better social service standards or for other similar purposes should be fully recognized. No staff member should be dismissed or in any other way penalized for such organizational activities.

6. *Collective Bargaining*

The method of collective bargaining has been used mainly in industrial employment. It is a tool that may reasonably be used wherever the employer-employee relationship exists and consequently social workers should be free to employ it. In industry, the strike is the final means of enforcing the workers' demands. For social workers, the strike will seldom be a feasible weapon because of the necessity of protecting the interests of the clients. In the main the resort should be to reason and to processes of community education. We

would not, however, rule out the method of the strike as inherently impossible. We would only hold that the conditions must be exceptional and the client must be protected.

(Our conclusions on this point need elaboration and we suggest that the subject be given further study during the coming year.)

7. Salaries

The committee recommends:

- (a) The fixing of minimum-maximum salary rates for each category of workers in a social agency.
- (b) Automatic yearly increases within the minimum-maximum limits. In making this recommendation the committee felt that if a staff member was good enough to remain on the staff he was good enough to deserve an increase on the basis of increasing human needs, advancing age, etc. Increments would not necessarily imply that the worker receiving them was becoming of increasing value to the organization and no commitment as to retention would be connoted. Exceptional merit would be recognized by promotion from one category to another and thus from one salary scale to another.

(Our conclusions on this point need elaboration and we suggest that the subject be given further study during the coming year.)

- (c) A yearly evaluation of the efficiency of employees as a basis for promotions or continuance in service. The substance of the evaluation should be made known to the employee.

8. Hours

- (a) Work should be limited to operable proportions for both field and office staff—it being recognized that a desirable standard of performance cannot be expected to accompany an over-assignment of work load.
- (b) There should be a definite policy of compensation either in time or salary for overtime work beyond that inherent as an emergency hazard in the profession of social work, such policy, including the time element, being made known to the staff member at the time of employment.

9. Leaves of Absence

- (a) Annual vacations with pay should be granted to all employees who have been employed one year, with a minimum of 30 calendar days for social workers. Those employed less than one year should have vacations on a pro rata basis.
- (b) A minimum of 30 working days' sick leave

with pay should be allowed during the year, or a proportional amount for length of service less than one year. The agency may require a physical examination by a doctor of its own selection at its own expense when absences on account of sickness total two weeks or more in a single year.

- (c) Adequate maternity leave should be provided, at least for the members of the staff who have been employed for two years or longer; part or all of this leave to be with compensation.
- (d) Leaves of absence without pay for study, travel or personal business should be granted when this can be arranged without jeopardizing the work of the organization. Provision for sabbatical leave on full or part salary is also desirable.

10. Working Conditions

- (a) Working conditions should conform to adequate standards of health, sanitation and fire prevention.
- (b) Adequate equipment for efficient work should be provided, e.g., desks, chairs, telephones and interviewing rooms.

11. Selection of Personnel

- (a) Employees should be selected solely on the basis of qualification.
- (b) Means and residence tests should not be criteria for employment.
- (c) There should be no discrimination or preference in the selection of staff based on sex, race, creed (except as it applies to sectarian agencies), political affiliation, marital status, or war service.
- (d) There should be made known to each prospective staff member before employment the objectives of the organization, the hours of service, vacation periods, sick and maternity leaves and other similar conditions of service.
- (e) The committee endorses the principle of a merit system in filling public positions, with a recognition of the need for reorganization of some present civil service practices. (As another committee of the New York Chapter is studying this subject, this committee did not pursue it further).

12. Workmen's Compensation

There should be provision for workmen's compensation for injury sustained in performance of the job.

13. Retirement

There should be provision for an agency retirement plan as a desirable method of retiring employees of long service.

THE AASW NATIONAL ORGANIZATION AND PROGRAM

WALTER M. WEST

Executive Secretary, American Association of Social Workers

THE American Association of Social Workers now has about 9,400 members who have been selected on the basis of accepted standards of proficiency as social workers. There are 68 local and state or regional chapters. There are five councils of chapters and members in states in which there are several chapters each. About 500 members are not, geographically, in position to participate in chapters.

A national organization is maintained by the AASW. Except for minor earnings, this is maintained by dues of members amounting at this time to about \$46,000. Additional membership dues support chapter activities.

The membership voice in the AASW is expressed in the delegate conference, and in the election of officers and executive committee. Less formal expression comes through contacts with chapters and members, through committees and through extensive correspondence.

The national organization consists of:

1. **Officers and the Executive Committee** which are charged by the By-Laws with administration of the AASW consistent with actions taken by the membership. The size of the membership naturally throws responsibility for practically all management on this Committee. The six elective officers and nine elected members compose the Executive Committee. Chairmen of Standing Committees also are members of the Committee.

An Ad Interim Committee composed of members of the Executive Committee within convenient call of the national office functions for the Executive Committee on matters of accepted policy between meetings of the whole Committee.

2. **National Committees** to which are delegated by the Executive Committee certain subjects or areas of Association responsibility. As particular activities evolve and become defined, certain of the Executive Committee's responsibilities are delegated or partially delegated.
3. **The staff** which carries out the plans made by the Executive Committee, assisting the various national committees to function on the work assigned to them, collects and brings before the committees the material

bearing on their assignments, develops correspondence and direct contact with chapters and members, publishes *The Compass*, chapter bulletins, etc., and makes contacts of many kinds with other social work agencies, other professional agencies, and with such public interests as bear on social work, and also carries out the heavy routine business required by a selective membership organization.

4. **A Nominating Committee** which provides a ballot for the use of the membership in electing officers and the Executive Committee.

THE ASSOCIATION'S PURPOSE

The purpose of the AASW is to increase the effectiveness of social work in meeting the needs of persons who come to it for any of the forms of assistance which social work performs.

Within this general purpose, the range of professional concerns which has been apparent in the activities of the membership might be summarized in the following assumptions on which the program of the AASW is being developed:

1. That the personnel factor in social agencies is the principal factor in the quality of service rendered, and that the problems of clients with which social work deals requires a high grade personnel equipped with knowledge of social work theory and practice.
2. That the selective membership basis of AASW organization is an effective device for the purpose of developing higher standards of personnel qualifications and selection.
3. That professional education is the key to development of such higher standards, as it is the only practicable and useful basis of objective selection, and as it is obviously the sound way to proceed to condense the essential experience and knowledge necessary to a social worker into a training process.
4. That working conditions under which social workers are employed are a proper subject for concern by the AASW, in view of the need for insuring the greatest possible degree of service to be rendered.
5. That a professional organization provides a useful channel through which the distinc-

tive experience and knowledge, gained by professional education and practicing social work, may be made available to the public and particularly to those responsible for developing and administering social programs.

6. That persistent efforts are required by practicing social workers to extend and refine the value of social work practice, and that professional intercourse between members of the AASW should therefore be stimulated.
7. That in working on these concerns, the professional organization finds itself facing the unsolved problems of social work—problems of organization, function, auspices and finances; of the extent of unmet needs, quality of service and content of the particular contribution which social work offers; of personnel standards, professional education and working conditions. It finds itself facing, also, a great variety of opinions and approaches to these problems on the part of social workers as well as the public. It is a further assumption that professional organization and activity is of great importance to any advances in the understanding and interpretation of these problems.

THE NATIONAL'S PLACE IN THE ASSOCIATION

The AASW started as a national association of individual members. Soon afterwards members in larger cities found a channel for utilizing their membership directly by the organization of chapters. This memorandum is to outline the national organization and deals with chapters only as they affect the program of the national.

In the view of the AASW administration, the wide participation of the membership in professional activities in relation to the objectives of the Association is recognized as the way in which the social work profession must expect its development. It is, therefore, a controlling principle of the AASW that activity of the national Association is valid when it stimulates and aids membership and chapter programs.

The problems with which the profession is dealing as outlined above stem from the actual practice of social work which is always localized. This requires that the principal function of the national Association be that of a clearing center with a "case load of ideas about professional development." A national committee's pronouncements on standards of personnel, on governmental program, or on conditions of work in social agencies are valid insofar as they are demonstrable somewhere in the field.

Emphasis is placed on this aspect of the Association's function because of its effect on budget and program. It is not necessary to overlook in doing so the many ways in which the national is called on to represent and occasionally to act directly for the membership.

ACTIVITIES OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Within these purposes and resources, the Association's problem of administration is to select the things to do in advancing professional objectives which most need doing, and which lend themselves to the particular kind of resources in members, finances, and structure which the Association has, and also to utilize these resources to the fullest extent.

The following summary of national activities shows the membership group of committees and the Personnel Standards, Employment Practices, and Government and Social Work Divisions taking general responsibility for activities in their respective fields. Their programs deal with the continuing need for definition and clarification, and also with events as they occur, such as shifts in a national relief policy, changes in demand for professional service, the issues involved in demobilization of a program, threats against standards of services.

The program summary also shows the organization activities through which the Association attempts to increase its resourcefulness and effectiveness.

1. *Administration of the Membership Requirements*

This Association began as an organization of persons presumably performing related social services; a selected membership. It was never conceived as a membership of persons to be chosen because of common interest, or enthusiasm for a social cause. The basic assumption was that social workers had some qualities and certain experiences in common which, if brought together in an association, would give greater effectiveness to the performance of those workers, with all which that would mean to the value and understanding of social work itself.

There immediately developed the problem of determining who was a qualified social worker, and what were the qualities and experiences which provided the equipment for endorsement by the professional Association. The membership requirements in use since 1933 represent the current definition of such qualities and experience. The persistent and increasingly intensive membership work by the Association's staff and committees has brought returns of great value to the public, as well as to social work and social workers, by

providing a workable and useful basic definition of the qualified worker.

As the Association has advanced its qualifications, it has found its concern to be more and more with professional criteria. Definitions can be increasingly in terms of professional education. Instead of attempting to evaluate experience in terms of the environmental value of an agency's practice, the membership work tends toward the more professionally useful methods of appraising the proficiency of the applicant in terms of common educational experience. We may be approaching the time when, instead of judging a worker by the agency which employs him, it will be possible to appraise the agency by the quality of its staff in relation to professional standards.

In addition to a vast amount of detail office work regarding maintenance of existing memberships, there are two functions regarding membership applications which are performed by the National Membership Committee with assistance by the national office staff.

One function is to pass on the new applications for membership. In 1934 there were 1,109 such applications received and for the first nine months of 1935 there were 1,078 applications. The review of applications requires extensive relationships with chapter membership committees, professional schools, etc.

The second function of the National Membership Committee is the continual inter-relation of the membership requirements, dealing with unanticipated problems and policies involved in the process, and the continued efforts to improve the application of the requirements. For the coming year the four major problems, each in charge of a sub-committee of the National Membership Committee, are:

- a. *Admissions under Section 6.* This is the "exceptional" clause of the membership requirements and raises such questions as that of unequal use of professional schools by different fields of social work, etc.
- b. *Definition of Technical Requirements.* When the present requirements were adopted, many terms were left for further definition by the administration of the AASW. The sub-committee is working particularly on the problem of accrediting professional curricula and courses in connection with membership, and with definitions of the field work requirement.
- c. *Approved Agencies.* A sub-committee is experimenting with some questionnaires to find out whether certain criteria can be devised for appraising the value of experience in various social agencies.
- d. *Examinations.* The National Membership Committee has been authorized to experiment for a year with admissions to membership by examina-

tions. A sub-committee has been established to work out this experiment.

2. Professional Standards

While the membership work of the AASW is going on to define a standard and to administer the By-Law provisions with respect to membership applications, the Association's concern with the personnel factor in social work includes the whole field and the whole complex of problems which are involved in the selection of staff by social programs, public and private.

A division on personnel standards has been assigned by the Executive Committee the tasks of focusing these problems and of clarifying the inter-relationship of the various aspects of standards which are met with in current problems, such as: the large numbers of persons recruited by public agencies during the depression, and their relationship to professional practice, possibilities for their training, the question of standards applied to demobilization and dismissal, promotion and improvement of personnel selection by the merit system, certification, standards of selection by private agencies, etc.

Achievement in this area of professional development is recognition of the value and usefulness of the special qualifications of social workers in performing the services in which social work has developed proficiency. It is a standing problem with each gain leaving areas of misunderstanding both in and out of the profession itself as to what the special qualifications are, the relation of professional education, and other methods of acquiring qualifications.

Experience of the Association indicates that the central focus of these problems of professional development locates itself in professional education, and that progress must depend on development in that field, and on a greater understanding of it by the social workers themselves.

Job Analysis

The fourth and fifth studies in the series of job analyses which the Association has been conducting since 1926, have been completed and published during the past year. These studies present a description of the work-steps in social work of various kinds, and contributes to the understanding of the status, qualifications, and performance of the practicing social worker.

Directory

A biographical directory of the membership of the Association is now in process and will be published shortly. The directory, listing the professional education and experience of social workers, may be expected to serve as tangible evidence, in quarters not yet aware, that such a

broad professional basis of activities exists in social work.

3. *Employment Practices*

As a corollary to its belief that persons who are expected to do social work should have professional qualifications, the AASW has as an objective that working conditions and relationships should be such that the full values of good personnel can be realized.

The Division on Employment Practices is working on the development of standard practices, and also means by which the AASW may be influential in dealing with deviations from satisfactory working conditions. The Division has also been interested in outlining plans for a comprehensive study of personnel factors in social work.

4. *Government and Social Work*

No doubt the most urgent problem before social work at the present time is the necessity for renewed federal assistance to states for relief, and the establishment of a long-time policy of making such assistance available.

The Division on Government and Social Work is concerned immediately with means of formulating the important factors for legislation and administration which are known to social workers, and in urging their consideration in Congress, state legislatures, and to national, state, and local administrations.

The principal question is adequate provision for relief. Special questions demanding attention are: federal responsibility for transients; the provision of a relief program in connection with persons in rural areas under the responsibility of the Rural Resettlement Administration; and the methods which are needed to transform the emergency type of relief program into a system of permanent public assistance. The assistance provisions in the Security Act also require close cooperation by the AASW.

Particularly close relationships with chapters are aimed at by the Division so that full use of available evidence and opinion can be made, and so that efforts of social workers on state and local programs can be fitted with those which bear on the national program.

Possibilities of development in low cost housing have been followed by an Association Committee on Housing. This Committee has been keeping in touch with the government's program, with other housing interest, and with housing committees in chapters.

RELATIONS TO MEMBERS AND CHAPTERS

An important part of all work of each national division and committee, and of the national staff, is to relate, as closely as possible, their activities

to those of the chapters and to the membership. The organized channels for these contacts are enumerated below:

1. *Publications*

The Compass has been expanded as the resources of the AASW have provided more opportunity to secure comment and reports on professional activity. Appreciation of the improvement reaches the office frequently, as do some expressions of disappointment that the Association does not publish a more readable or exciting periodical.

Possibilities of further improvement of *The Compass* range from provision for more planful editing of current material to the launching of a professional journal. Because it is the most frequent and far-reaching medium of the professional association, its improvement is one of the most active questions in the administration of the AASW.

Books and Pamphlets. Occasionally manuscripts are published by the Association when material is available which bears on some phase of professional development. While most of the titles published by the AASW have paid for themselves, no attempt has been made to go into the publishing business in a large way, as there are a number of other organizations better equipped than the Association for the editing of manuscripts and the distribution of books.

Efforts are made to bring to the attention of social workers certain pamphlets or books which have direct bearing on the profession, whether they are published by the AASW or under other auspices. A Committee on Publications is planned by the Executive Committee to work out a more positive position for the Association on *Compass* and other publications.

Chapter Bulletins. Efforts are made to keep chapters informed of material on which the national committees and national office are working. In addition to a large correspondence with chapters about their programs, and about the work of other chapters, chapter bulletins are sent at frequent intervals.

These bulletins are of four series: *Administrative*, which relate to organization plans; *Discussion*, which contain material believed to be helpful to chapter program discussion; *Membership*, which relate the work of the national to the chapter membership committees; and *Chapter Notes*, a monthly bulletin summarizing current chapter activities reported to the national office.

2. *Conferences*

Direct contact and discussion of professional matters as well as on Association policy has become an increasingly difficult problem as the

membership of the Association has expanded. For many years, efforts to bring this about through a council plan written into the By-Laws was not successful. The Delegate Conference, more informally organized but on a representative basis, has proven highly successful in the past two years. Its influence on the total Association program has gone beyond the content or the value of the Conference itself, and has made itself felt in pointing up common program interests of chapters.

Association participation in the National Conference of Social Work is also an important link between the geographically scattered elements of the Association. State conferences provide similar opportunity for professional activity on a state-wide basis. The national Association has enlarged the resources which it has to offer the members and chapters in the various states, and has kept up a continuous promotion effort to increase the use of state conference.

3. Visits to Chapters

An important method of relating national to chapter programs is the visiting of chapters by the national staff. The demand from the field for this service from the national has always been beyond the capacity to supply it. As the Association's means have allowed, the various standing committees of the Association have included appointments on a more representative basis geographically with travel expenses allowed for regular meetings.

To an ever-increasing extent the national Association has devoted its attention to the organization and program problems of chapters. Development of strong chapters the national Association recognizes as the most likely and practicable method of providing for actual membership participation in professional activities, and of thereby securing vastly greater results than could be secured by concentration on national efforts. National activities are necessarily general, both as to subject matter and as to application in various parts of the country. Chapter programs are applicable to the more particular and immediate interests of the social workers.

As a means of developing more effective chapter programs, closer relationship between chapters, and between them and the national Association, a standing Committee on Chapter Organization and Program is being set up.

4. State Organizations

To co-ordinate the programs of the several chapters in some of the states, to provide opportunity for inter-chapter state cooperation on public state-wide social programs, state councils or divisions have been organized recently in several states

in each of which there were several local chapters. These organizations also embrace members in the state who are not in the local chapter areas. Such inter-chapter organizations have been established recently in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Michigan, and California. Certain organization problems relating to local chapters are created by these developments which the Committee on Chapter Organization and Program will consider.

ORGANIZATION BUSINESS

Underlying the activities which the national office and committees are able to undertake are the primary functions of keeping a growing selective membership organization together, and in discharging the routine responsibilities incurred by a national office in a profession which has been getting increased national and local attention. Without making a complete list of these office duties, members of the Association are entitled to know that a considerable part of the income of the Association is required for these essential routines.

The Association office, following preliminary membership work by chapters, makes a careful check of each application, checking with inactive files, records qualifications for reference and tabulation, sends for references and school credits, except in chapter territory, checks applications with college and professional school catalogues, and, in the case of many applications, carries on extended correspondence with the applicant, references, schools, and chapters. The process is repeated on applications for reinstatement, and responsibility is also accepted for transfer from junior to full membership.

Approximately 550 changes of address are recorded monthly on the various membership lists required to be kept. Lists of chapter officers and committees are maintained, and reports of chapter activities indexed.

A modest business amounting to \$1,500 to \$2,000 annually is done in publication sales in small accounts.

To collect the Association dues will require approximately 18,000 bills this year, the recording of over 9,000 payments, and the naturally detailed bookkeeping required for handling this large number of accounts. Delayed and delinquent payments require monthly sorting of all membership records and special correspondence on delayed payments estimated at approximately 3,000 letters annually. Approximately 2,000 general inquiries about membership, the vocational possibilities in social work, inquiries for literature, etc., are received.

For each transaction involving dues, changes of address, and membership applications, notification

to a chapter, and sometimes more than one, is necessary.

STAFF

To service the national committees, maintain the chapter and other contacts, edit *The Compass*, and prosecute the other aspects of the program, the Association maintains a staff consisting of an executive secretary and three staff assistant secretaries, one of whom is primarily membership secretary and editor of *The Compass*, an office manager and secretary who centralizes organization activities, a membership assistant, three secretary-stenographers, a bookkeeper, and two clerks. A special staff of four is employed temporarily in the production of the directory.

APPARENT GAPS IN PROGRAM

A few of the activities which the Executive

Committee has believed it necessary to develop further are: a staff representative more available to follow the administrations of social programs in Washington; more attention to *The Compass*, or the development of a more adequate professional periodical; much more direct contact through field service; and more intensive production of material on the part of the several national divisions and committees.

As stated at the beginning, the problem of administering the Association is to define the desirable activities which the Association's resources can provide, and to stimulate the fullest use of those resources to advance the aims of the Association and of social work. Analysis of the various enterprises underway may disclose the possibility of adapting these resources more productively to professional needs.

AASW NATIONAL COMMITTEES

THE AASW program outlined in the preceding statement is being directed and developed under various national committees whose assignments and plans are described below. While the membership of the committees changes somewhat each year, and the set-up may be altered by addition of new committees, many of the activities discussed have to do with continuing functions of the AASW.

The constitutional or elected committees of the Association are the *Executive Committee* and the *Nominating Committee*. Standing committees are those to which are assigned responsibility for areas of Association interest and activity. Special committees are those appointed to take charge of particular matters assigned to them.

CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEES

The Executive Committee is responsible for the administration of the Association subject only to such controlling policies as are established in the By-Laws or otherwise by vote of the membership.

The Executive Committee is responsible for the Association's budget and finances, for arranging all matters of administration, employment of staff, and assignments to standing and special committees. It grants applications for chapters, and has the eventual responsibility for all functions of the organization.

It is composed of six officers, nine elected members, and the chairmen of standing committees. Officers are elected for one-year terms and chairmen of standing committees are appointed annually. Members of the Executive Committee are elected for three-year terms, one-third being elected each year.

As the Association has acquired means to do so, the Executive Committee has been chosen on an increasingly expanding geographical base. Members of the Executive Committee are elected at large and not as representatives of particular chapters, however. Payment of expenses to meetings has always been a practice in relation to the Committee, in order that it may not be limited to members able for one reason or another to attend.

Meetings of the Executive Committee are held about four times a year.

The Ad Interim Committee. Members of the Executive Committee within convenient distance from the Association office are appointed to the Ad Interim Committee which meets monthly, and on other special occasions, and which carries on the responsibilities of the Executive Committee between its meetings, and subject to its policies. All actions by the Ad Interim Committee are subject to approval by the Executive Committee.

Nominating Committee. A committee of five members chosen at large is elected each year, responsible for presenting a list of nominees for officers and Executive and Nominating Committee memberships.

STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

This group of committees are, in a sense, sub-executive committees in that they have delegated responsibility from the Executive Committee for their respective fields of Association activities. They are responsible to the Executive Committee. Appointments to Standing Committees are for one year, and are renewable. It is the policy of the Association to make some changes in committee membership annually.

As the program of the Association is being carried on at the present time in three main areas, Divisions have been created in order to co-ordinate the various activities in these respective fields. The Division Committee or Steering Committee in each case is a Standing Committee of the Association, with such special committees as it needs for its current program. Social work programs, personnel standards, and employment practices are not separate problems, but can be worked at separately. At many points they come together. The work of the Divisions is correlated by the Executive Committee and through the staff which keeps in direct contact with all of them.

1. *Division on Government and Social Work*

The assignment given to this Division is to study and report on factors in social work experience which are pertinent to the development of governmental social work programs and to present evidence on such matters to public officials or others interested. The Division is to work through the chapters of the Association so that its information may be representative of social work and should also serve the chapters by supplying them with such data and other material which may assist them to stimulate or develop active programs dealing with the relation between government and social work.

This Division is the outgrowth of earlier activities of the AASW and of a Steering Committee on Federal Action informally organized in 1931 by representatives of national agencies who were interested in seeing that social work knowledge and experience was brought to bear upon any federal legislation which might be enacted that winter in connection with unemployment and unemployment relief. The chief efforts of this group were devoted to formulation of principles involved in the original Costigan-LaFollette Federal Relief Bill, and to assistance to the Association in organizing testimony for this legislation.

In November, 1932, the group was formally absorbed by the AASW as a Committee on Federal Action on Unemployment. In the fall of 1933, it became the Division on Government and Social Work working through several subcommittees.

A few of the outstanding activities of the committee have been those which were related to the later hearings on the Costigan-LaFollette legislation in January, 1933, and to the subsequent drafting of the final bill which passed in April of that year, and to developments in the federal relief program since that time. It has been interested in legislation dealing with the federal employment service, transients, housing, and other legislation closely related to social work. It has developed

material on details of relief policy, such as cash relief, commissaries, work relief, health services, unemployment insurance, public works, and state welfare organization. During this entire period, the group has been working under the chairmanship of Linton Swift.

With the passage of the Costigan-LaFollette legislation, the program of the Division became much more complicated, due to problems of relief administration and to the wide variety of proposals for national and state welfare programs. At the present time, the major problems are those which grow out of relief reorganization caused by the new Works Program and the many social factors involved in the pending Security Legislation, the fact that state welfare departments must be established to take care of the problems passed on to the states by these two items of legislation, and the possibility that the present situation could be so handled as to lead to the development of a permanent public welfare administration in the federal government.

From recent activities, the Committee has concluded that the problems growing out of categorical organization of relief, out of work relief and the administrative principles involved in the grant-in-aid relationship between the federal and state governments are among the immediate issues involved in developing a sound program of federal, state, and local cooperation for social welfare.

2. *Division on Personnel Standards*

What it is that makes proficiency in social work, the "ear-marks" of proficiency in terms of criteria of education and experience, and finding ways in which the Association's influence may be exerted on behalf of selection of qualified workers in public and private agencies, and other broad underlying issues, constitute the Division's assignment.

At its first meeting in February, 1934, the Division Committee found itself in agreement that standards of personnel were equally important in public and private social work. Earlier years of AASW work in this connection have tended to advance this hypothesis, but have acquired the character of separate projects rather than the integrated character needed on each piece of work as it goes forward now under the impetus of new social planning and machinery.

Certification as means of identifying qualified workers, and civil service as a means of selecting qualified workers for public positions were taken as initial assignments for 1934-35.

The Division has studied a plan by which the AASW might effect some type of affiliation with persons in social work who might provisionally qualify for membership. The plan grew out of

problems that seemed to require means for establishing a pre-professional standard for personnel selection in the period of expansion and subsequent demobilization that could relate itself in a practical way to the existing professional standard. A plan referred to the Division by the Executive Committee was worked over and recommended to the membership for consideration. At the Delegate Conference of February, 1935, rather than taking a vote on the principle of the proposal, it was decided to refer it back to chapters for further discussion and understanding.

During the coming year continued attention of the Division will be required for these projects, and to it will also be brought the problems in this area of professional standards which come to the AASW through the chapters, field visits, correspondence, etc. Underway in the national office at present, related to the Division's work, is an official declaration of the nature and purposes of the AASW, and the preparation of a biographical directory of the AASW membership.

Each of these projects leads to a need for a greater understanding by AASW members, and by a much larger circle, of the place of professional organization in social work, and of the use of its membership, as a definition of issues to show what aspects of social work organization and programs are supporting standards and what aspects are weakening standards.

The Division and the National Membership Committee have a common interest in standards of personnel. The National Membership Committee is engaged in working out criteria and rules which can apply to membership in the AASW as to experience in agencies, as to professional education, field work, and general education. While the criteria would have no meaning unless they applied to the question of competence to function as a social worker as well as to membership, the work of the National Membership Committee must be limited, as an administrative function, by the present By-Law provisions. However, as the AASW must be interested in the question of what kind of personnel is employed in social work, regardless of membership, its total function is a broader one.

3. *Division on Employment Practices*

This Division is charged generally with "the formulation and development of the AASW's policy regarding the relation of employment practices to standards of personnel in social work." Specific charges include: Gathering data on employment practices; disseminating such data through chapters, agencies, and by publication in *The Compass*; cooperating with agencies and local employment practice programs; consideration of

an Association standard of employment practices; formulation of a plan for research on the subject of employment conditions in social work; and lastly, a study and revision of the Association's grounds for and method of dealing with complaints.

The keynote of the Division has been stated as follows: "An Association objective is a qualified social work personnel, adequately prepared, working under desirable conditions and performing to its maximum extent. In support of this objective an essential element of the Association's program is to work for a stabilization and improvement of employment practices in social work. The AASW assumes there is a causal relationship between standards of social work services and the factors of qualifications of social workers, and the conditions under which they work. The promotion of adequate employment conditions in social work, as a means of attracting to the profession able recruits, of holding in the practice of social work those most qualified to serve, and of establishing a working environment which will be conducive to enthusiastic effort, is the basis of the program of the Division on Employment Practices."

Extensive reference to chapters of Division material has provided opportunity for wide discussion by the membership of the relationship of the professional Association to working conditions of staff in social work and of plans for dealing with complaints of workers against working conditions. A bibliography on *Employment Practices in Social Work* was prepared and published in cooperation with the Chicago Chapter's Employment Practices Committee and the Russell Sage Foundation.

The Committee on Research has studied the research activities of other professional organizations and has prepared a tentative report developing the need of such research activities in the field of social work. This committee will also study and make recommendations regarding the problem of financing such a project.

Current activities include: Development of a standard of employment practices by which the Association may attempt to influence public and private social agencies to improve working conditions and relationships; further Division study of the question of Association protective and disciplinary activity which should lead to refinement of the present tentative machinery for handling complaints; further formulation of the research project on personnel and employment practices in social work.

4. *National Membership Committee*

The National Membership Committee is

charged with the responsibility for administering the membership requirements as set forth in the By-Laws, for studying the operation of the requirements in relation to the various fields of social work, existing training facilities and the qualifications of excluded personnel, and for recommending to the Executive Committee such definitions and interpretations of the requirements as seem to be indicated by experience.

In carrying out these responsibilities during the coming year (1935-1936) the National Membership Committee will have four sub-committees whose functions are outlined below. The chairman of the National Membership Committee will serve as an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee and will be responsible for keeping the Executive Committee informed of the work of these committees and for bringing before it any modifications of existing definitions and interpretations which may be recommended by these committees. He will also serve as chairman of one of the sub-committees.

(1) *Sub-Committee on Section 6*

Section 6 of the membership requirements states that "the Executive Committee may in exceptional circumstances elect to membership persons who do not technically meet the requirements." Since this section provides the one loop-hole for admission to the Association without professional education, the problems presented are numerous and objective criteria of eligibility difficult to arrive at. The Executive Committee has previously shared the responsibility for interpreting this section and has taken the final responsibility for admissions. For the present, however, the Executive Committee has delegated full responsibility for the administration of this section to the National Membership Committee with instructions to bring in a report in April, 1936, on the operation of the section and any definitions of eligibility which additional experience may show to be reasonable and applicable. As it is likely that no satisfactory tests of eligibility can be found except on the basis of examination, the Committee will work closely with the Sub-Committee on Examinations, submitting to that committee some test cases for examination as soon as it is ready to consider specific cases.

(2) *Sub-Committee on Technical Requirements*

This committee is responsible for studying social work courses which are offered by applicants for membership under the professional education requirements and for the application of the criteria for approved courses which were tentatively adopted by the Executive Committee after the requirements for full membership went into effect

and which were published in the December, 1933, *Compass*. Under these criteria a number of social work curricula and "random" courses (groups of two or three social work courses combined with field work) outside the membership of the Association of Schools have been tentatively accredited on a limited basis. Some of the curricula have been in the process of qualifying for membership in the Association of Schools, while in others the objective is limited to partial professional preparation which will interest students in going on to the graduate schools to complete their training. The results of the operation of the criteria so far have been three-fold: they have increased somewhat the opportunities to qualify for junior membership in the Association; they have stimulated some institutions to greater activity in qualifying for membership in the Association of Schools, so that their graduates may become eligible to full membership in the AASW; and they have set a standard for institutions which would not be logical centers for graduate schools, but which are interested in providing partial professional preparation for students who would otherwise take social work positions with no preparation.

The application of the criteria has been extended for one more year by the Executive Committee (until October, 1936), so that the sub-committee will continue to evaluate social work courses that have not previously come before it. It will also review all courses which have been previously accredited and will prepare a report for the Executive Committee before October, 1936, on training developments and the advisability of continuing or discontinuing the accrediting of social work courses outside the membership of the Association of Schools after that date.

The other major responsibility of this sub-committee during the coming year will be the application of the supervised practice procedure. This procedure, which was developed to meet the situation caused by shortage of field work opportunities under the schools of social work, was approved by the Executive Committee for an experimental period of one year beginning October 1, 1935, and was announced in *The Compass* for May, 1935. Under this procedure a special six months' period of training must be set up and applicants who wish to submit this period of supervised practice in fulfillment of the field work requirement must register their intention to offer it in advance. These applications to submit supervised practice are reviewed by the committee before the candidate is authorized to proceed and all candidates within a reasonable distance of a school of social work are referred to the school for a solution of the field work problem before

any action is taken under the supervised practice procedure. If the school is unable to make a field work arrangement for a candidate he may be authorized to undertake a period of supervised practice under the conditions outlined. At the end of the six months' period a detailed report is made by the candidate and the supervisor, at which time the committee decides whether the training has been sufficiently satisfactory to be accepted in fulfillment of the field work requirement. So far, registrations have not been numerous as the conditions are difficult to meet.

(3) *Sub-Committee on Approved Agency Criteria*

Tentative criteria for an "approved agency" were drawn up by the National Membership Committee last year in response to requests from the chapters for some definite descriptions for use primarily in determining whether relief agencies could be considered "approved." Criteria were drawn up under three headings: Financial Stability, Staff Development and Community Relationships. A fourth section on Employment Practices was drawn up by the Division on Employment Practices and incorporated in the criteria. The criteria and a questionnaire which was drawn up to provide the information necessary for an evaluation were sent out to the chapters with the suggestion that they have some of the questionnaires filled out for experimental evaluation of the criteria.

After a number of questionnaires had been returned, the Sub-Committee on Approved Agency Criteria was appointed to study them, not with a view to evaluating the agencies for purposes of membership, but to determine how effective the questionnaire and criteria were in reflecting the agency's ability to give competent service.

The committee found itself handicapped in this evaluation through lack of knowledge as to what norms of practice would be indicated by similar returns from agencies accepted as standard. It therefore decided to ask a small group of agencies to cooperate by filling out the questionnaire which would provide some data on practices in agencies considered to be standard and would also indicate whether the questionnaire is sufficiently well drawn to bring out pertinent information when carefully answered.

The committee will report to the National Membership Committee on the results of its study, indicating whether in its opinion this method of evaluating agencies can be successfully applied in connection with applications for membership, or in what way the method need be altered.

It is interesting to note that so far the greatest interest in the criteria for practical purposes has

been expressed in connection with examinations both for civil service and for registration (California).

(4) *Sub-Committee on Examinations*

This committee will be appointed for the first time this year. Its assignment, as authorized by the Executive Committee, will be the experimental development of an examination procedure for applicants who do not meet the technical requirements for membership. The need for such a procedure has been discussed at various times both by the Sub-Committee on Section 6 and the Sub-Committee on Technical Requirements. In considering the problem of the large number of capable persons in the field who have not had required professional education the AASW wants to develop a more discriminating selection process than its present operation allows.

An important aspect of this plan is that with any considerable degree of success, the AASW would be developing a procedure which would coincide with procedures necessary for appraisal by civil service, or for setting up any legal certification plan. If the AASW found out how to give examinations, the results of which were fairly reliable in selecting and rating proficiency in social work practice, it would have gone a long way toward providing a practicable basis for selection of persons on a merit basis for public social work.

Whether examinations for membership would need to be specialized for various fields and geographical areas, or could be worked out on a generic basis, is one of the problems before the sub-committee.

When its work on examination plans has progressed far enough, the Sub-Committee on Section 6 will select some applications. At the end of the trial period the Sub-Committee will submit its findings, leaving the AASW to decide whether they justify permanent inclusion of an examination plan in the membership requirements.

5. *Committee on Chapter Organization and Chapter Programs*

In view of the importance attached to chapters, a standing committee on Chapter Organization and Chapter Programs has been set up. This committee is authorized to study the problem of chapter programs and ways in which the national Association may assist in strengthening these programs; methods by which chapters may also interpret social work needs to the national Association; problems of organization of chapters, including those arising in regard to chapter boundaries and minimum standards for chapter status; state councils of chapters; and in general such problems as concern the place of chapters in the Association.

Miss Mary E Murphy
848 No Dearborn St
Chicago Ill

During the past few years a number of new aspects of the chapter problem have arisen. The rapid growth of AASW membership has meant large increases in the number looking for participation in chapter activities. The extreme activity in social work has also brought new demands for chapter action. Successful management of the affairs of the larger chapters requires practically full-time service, which in most cases has not been available.

The committee will be asked to advise the national Executive Committee on ways in which it may assist chapter organizations and programs to meet the needs of the growing membership and the increasing responsibility for social work which is being shouldered by the profession.

The Executive Committee also needs careful interpretation of the responsibilities which chapters should be asked to assume. Equitable representation in the delegate conferences, and problems having to do with definition of chapter territory precipitated by the new dues' policy, are questions to be decided.

By a study of chapter programs ways may be found in which the national Association can assist and strengthen chapters and chapters can interpret needs of the profession to the national Association.

6. *Committee on Conferences*

Instead of a special committee appointed each year to plan the program and arrangements for the Delegate Conference, a standing committee in charge of the AASW activities in relation to conferences is being created.

To this committee will be assigned responsibility for planning the Delegate Conferences, Association programs at the National Conferences, problems arising in the national Association in relation to state conferences, and in connection with conferences developed by particular social work fields or organizations.

The committee is also asked to advise on the need for special conferences or national or other meetings of the Association as platforms for interpretation of professional aims and programs, as

for instance, in connection with the present need for getting public attention to the relief crisis.

7. *Finance Committee*

This committee is charged with the responsibility for devising ways and means of securing the Association's revenue. While its responsibility is for revenue for the national budget, the committee should be concerned also with financial policies and problems of the chapters and state organizations.

At the present time special problems of chapter relationships, etc., under the national dues collection plan need early attention by the Finance Committee, such as:

1. Interpretation of the new By-Law provisions to the membership.
2. Policies regarding national collection of dues.
3. Methods to be used in stimulating contributing and sustaining memberships for national and chapter budgets.
4. Consideration of future policy in relation to proposals that dues should be graduated according to income.
5. Immediate decisions regarding collection and billing procedure.

Questions of the amount of revenue needed, and of expenditures, etc., are closely related to the central problem of planning the Association's program and are therefore the continuing responsibility of the Executive Committee.

8. *Committee on Housing*

A special Committee on Housing was created to keep before the Association developments in housing legislation and projects and their particular relation to social work. The committee has submitted discussion material to chapters, represented the Association at housing conferences, and conducted a column of current housing news in *The Compass*. Suggestions for study of matters relating to organization of housing programs, to social questions involved in housing, and to management of low cost housing projects have been stressed.